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ECHO NEWS

World watches as Dale Farm evictions loom

12:00pm Wednesday 13th April 2011

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By Jon Austin >

CAMPAIGNERS have staged an anti-eviction protest at the gates of Dale Farm traveller camp.

About 60 people, including representatives of a United Nations committee on forced evictions, met at the illegal green belt site in Crays Hill to urge Basildon Council to hold its £18million eviction of about 90 families.

Yves Cabannes, a professor at the University of London and chairman of the UN advisory group on forced evictions congratulated the traveller families on continuing to live illegally at Dale Farm in the face of the council's threat to remove them by force.

He said: "A forced eviction is the wrong way to go about things. If Dale Farm is not suitable, that is not the responsibility of the people.

"It is for the Government to deliver what it is expected to deliver, which is proper pitches or places for them to settle."

He said the Government would ultimately be responsible for what happened to Dale Farm families if they were moved out.

Protesters in camper vans, from as far away as Croatia, Kosovo, Spain, Germany, Belgium, Scotland and Wales arrived to demonstrate on what had been declared World Zero Evictions Day.

Traveller Joe Jones, chairman of the Gypsy Council, said the crisis at Dale Farm and at other campsites had been caused by the failure of councils to designate suitable land for travellers since 1994.

He added: "Just tell us where we can live legally and we'll go there."



Some of the demonstrators who gathered at the entrance to the Dale Farm camp for Saturday's event, which included representatives of a United Nations committee on forced evictions

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